

Volume III

Issue 1

# The Lowell Pearl



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Volume III

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# The Lowell Pearl

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## Submitting to The Pearl

Our deadline for the next issue in May 10, 1993. Send Submissions to:

UMass Lowell Literary Society  
c/o South Campus English Dept.  
University of Massachusetts at Lowell  
1 University Ave.  
Lowell, MA 01854

Please send two copies of your submission with no identifying marks on them: it is our policy to read submissions anonymously. Enclose with the submission a separate cover page which lists the title of the submission, your name, permanent mailing address, home phone number, and some back ground information (if we use your submission, we'll need information for contributor's notes). We also require a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Our reply will come a reasonably short time after the submission deadline.

To writers of prose—and truly ambitious writers of poetry—submissions should be no longer than 5000 words. To poets, please do not send more than five of your poems.

We do not return submissions. Student who submit should give us a permanent address. We will probably need to contact you between semesters.

Feel free to send your submission on disk, it should be ASCII format, text only. Tell us the name of the system and application you are using as well.

Lastly, we are no longer accepting submissions through electronic mail systems.

If the above guidelines are not adhered to, we will not consider your submission.

## Introduction

In the past year, the *Pearl* received an increase of submissions, recognition, and respect. I would like to thank all the individuals who put in time, effort and dedication to produce this issue. I also thank the S.G.A for funding our endeavor, the English Department for its support and energy, and the local community for its enthusiasm and interest.

Since its beginning, the *Pearl* has grown from a good idea to an exceptional reality. I feel that Lowell, and especially the university, has an atmosphere where art and good literature will prosper. The growth of appreciation for literature rewards our efforts. I hope the *Pearl* is a forum for both established and new writers, for students of all ethnicity, and, of course, for good writing. The pieces that were selected for this journal are ones that impressed and inspired us. I hope you agree.

The works represented in this issue combine the diversity of individual experience with the commonalty of the human condition. They each have their own individual style, voice, and intention; yet, they speak for us all. I invite all our readers—including students, teachers, and non-university folk—to further participate in the betterment of the *Pearl* by submitting their writing.



Cindy T Moran  
Editor-in-Chief

## Dedication

Gardner Tillson's retirement is a loss for the entire university. After thirty-two years, the members of the University of Massachusetts Lowell will miss their colleague and friend. Professor Tillson's charisma and flair enlivened his classes and theater work. He was active with the University's drama club as a director, acting teacher and club advisor.

The members of the Literary Society dedicate this issue of the *Lowell Pearl* to you, Professor Tillson. And, although we know this dedication is only a small acknowledgment of your years of hard work, we express our best wishes. Embrace all you know and continue to teach and learn from the world around you.

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## The Lowell Pearl

## Le Tombeau de Messiaen

Mark Pestana

The angel "qui annonce la fin du Temps"  
Called Messiaen to join him yesterday;  
The pious Maestro took the seraph's hand  
And rose apart, although I bade him stay.

The cordial April breeze blew raw this morn,  
And in the pines, meek talons clutching fast  
The sap-fresh boughs, a sparrow chorus cheeped  
A tiny dirge against the haunted blast.

The song and squall alike grew softer then,  
As o'er the woods the sun his blanket cast;  
And with the withered whisper of the breeze  
The sparrows sighed, "The last giant has passed."

## Before I'm Ready

Joan Dalla

I picked blueberries this weekend  
in Vermont, learning how deliberate  
I can be. Judging the good from the bad

bush by bush, I started with one  
until it was picked clean  
and so on down the row.

Arriving home this morning to find  
my extra keys on the kitchen counter  
and a note from you taped to the cupboard

above: *I'm going back west, no round trip  
this time. I'll write.* I picked more  
than I needed in Vermont,

not speaking, not looking up,  
except to straighten my back.  
Sometimes rolling a green berry

in my hand to feel its hardness, or wiping  
the color with the sweat of my fingers  
to see if the ripeness would stick.

I touch your words often, precisely  
in this same silence, knowing  
some women might make a pie



with all this fruit and I'll eat them  
raw by the cupful and leave the rest  
to rot. Eating a handful now

as I open the door to the alley,  
looking for the West somewhere  
beyond the coarse lace of fire

escapes, considering what will be  
thrown away the next morning  
as the night hardens, before I'm ready.

## Comfort

The heaviness of a wool blanket means  
the scratchy khaki issues my father saved  
from World War II. Wrapped around

the cardboard seaman's chest in the garage  
where my Grandmother's passport, exit visa  
stamped: Franz Josef, Emperor of Austria,

King of Hungary, and half the world  
stayed buried. Until from an urge to find  
something we both believed in

or out of boredom with the listless summer heat,  
we pulled the rotted box out to the lawn,  
and threw the covers off. My father's hands

graceful as he turned back the lid. We put  
our fingers in. His family scattered in photographs  
at the bottom. Everyone dead, the stern

Hungarian faces accusing the camera of yet another  
invasion. All except my Magyar grandpa  
who laughs at the glassy eye—drunk as usual,

says my father, and surrounded by women.  
I examine the shaving strap scars he left  
on my father's back, as he bends over

to find a photograph of himself, handsome  
in his Army uniform. Happily believing  
in justice, though marked by one mistake:

daring to skate on the thin ice from which  
my grandfather had warned him away.  
A good soldier even then, he took his beating

loving the old man with an anger that slapped me  
hard one night. I still feel the floor rise up  
to meet me. Surprised by how heavy my father's hand

felt against my face while he wept  
over the broken promise never to strike his children.  
The tears gathering once again in his eyes,

and the passport stuck in his hand. I don't know how  
to say I understand what it means  
to never get anything you want in this world.

I can't tell him how often my lovers turn away  
coldly, as if this dark eye he has given me  
burns the blankets from their backs at night.

I just lean toward my father. Not able to touch  
what we have buried so deeply, or even to ask  
for the comfort a wool blanket should bring.

## Hard Evidence

I waited until the cold  
gathered in my sleeves  
and the sky fell off

in pieces, until the shadows  
stalked the neighbors' trees  
and the street lights

lit up the streets,  
until my mother's call to home  
completed my vigil. Hearing her voice

I abandoned the wall behind  
the old school yard where I had waited  
patiently on the cold stone

for the father god  
the nuns had said might  
thrust his hands through

the banked up clouds  
and touch my hair  
with always burning fire.

I made my way against  
the alley's yellow weeds  
for her, between the tract houses



where the older boys  
would pull my panties down  
and reach inside, the dogs

barking furiously against their fences—  
each step forward more dangerous  
than the last. For the first time

I counted the piles of leaves left  
in front of each house  
to calculate the distance

between myself and home.  
Raising my arms against  
the clear air before it became smoke,

the darkness alive  
but having no body on which  
to hang its jacket, and my breath

cupped in each small hand  
very simply more  
hard evidence I belong to no one.

## The Smell of Apples

*Taylor Graham*

The basket overflows  
between her knees,  
her full skirts flute the scent up.  
Apples, tangy flesh-tones  
touched with red.

She might be figuring  
the count of pies and crisps,  
factoring in the hunger  
of each son, each grandson,  
imagining already the outstretched  
hands. One apiece, perhaps,  
for polishing. See, she holds  
an apple blushed with amber,  
spring remembered  
through the tints of fall.

She picks it  
for her own:  
a taste she thinks  
could make her linger  
over summer.  
One step back. Her lips  
part imperceptibly  
to kiss the fruit.

## Here

*Mariola Mroczko*

Roses vine to somewhere away from the  
black trash drum.

These are the days of the great divide  
when the first day of summer is  
the coldest day of the year—  
when the electric light mistakes  
itself for the sun  
and the caterpillar slinks toward  
a June death.

These are the days of lost sleep, found  
nights, an early moon, and an  
endless ebb.

These are the days of rusty, chair-scribbles  
borne on a backyard breeze at a  
time when colors  
die.

## Huracán

September, 1989

*Margaret Smith*

It calls to the Caribbean trades:  
"Tell them I'm coming."  
Every bird, every starfish, every  
stinging urchin  
has known for weeks:  
"Tell them I'm coming and I cannot  
stop."

It cuts a path too sure, still hearing:  
*óyeme, Huracán, sálganos, sálganos.*

At three in the morning it creeps to my steps  
two thousand miles away  
and wraps a chill of moans ad supplications.

Corazón del cielo,  
placid-eyed, in your Milky Way spiral  
of destruction  
that eats whole worlds  
you hold the sky together.

I stand in the draw of your outstretched fingers,  
renewed in the baptism of storm.



## The First Fire

Smith

Inside, we bleed fire:  
it soaks the skin,  
it forms molten scabs to mend the soul.

I want to know who made this fire;  
I want to find more than these bones.

Everyone on this street carries it  
like brittle urns,  
through dust and fumes and dull sky,

And when you got home  
I heard you in the next room  
crying over the world's cold cold  
touches  
and those places in you that are  
starved for touch.  
How can we walk,  
when only our shadows brush,  
as if that friction alone  
could make a spark?

## In the Shadow of Geese

Smith

Night floats gently downstream,  
over the falls  
to shatter on the jagged earth below.  
But mostly we find quiet here,  
a quiet that covers the leaves, the ground,  
as you and I forget  
or pretend to forget why we came here:  
for the solace, for the stillness of the dark  
where I have wounded you.  
Then a perfect arrowhead of geese  
rises and carries the silence over our heads.  
As we walk back to the car,  
your arms, your eyes  
are the only unblemished places,  
the only sanctuary,  
now as remote to me  
as the bottom of the falls.

## Ancestors

*Beverly A McCoy*

A deep well  
Of ice cold water  
Flowed  
In the veins of the men.  
And the women  
Nursed their babies  
From the sillcock near the spring.  
Without blood,  
Without milk,  
They raised the children.

They plowed in the hard soil  
A narrow furrow.  
Sitting on maple chairs  
They offered flaccid breasts,  
Bony backs,  
Straight smiles.  
Pitchforks,  
Hay rakes,  
And levels  
Were the tools  
They forged their lives with.  
They raised the children  
Sparse and spare;  
Lean hearts they bound  
With scraps of wire and string.

*McCoy*

Fingers raised to test the tenor of the wind,  
They stood against the snow  
And sun,  
And raised the children  
True as plumb lines,  
Straight as steeples,  
Thin as lines  
Of silver in the glass  
Recording temperature  
And never feeling heat.

## street shaman

*Brian Robinson*

i knelt among small stones  
in the shoulder of the road  
and rolled back frayed sleeves  
freeing my wrists  
to the hedge magic.

stirring the blue viscera  
spilled from a screaming dog  
split in the wake of a semi;  
peering at the moon  
through bits of bottle glass  
pried from between curbstones;  
crouched and choking  
over smoldering cigarette ends  
heaped on an oil stain;  
and reading the dusty runes  
scuffed into the toes  
of my broken down boots.

i knelt among small stones  
in the shoulder of the road  
and buttoned frayed sleeves  
having divined nothing

*Robinson*

## Haiku

the wind-curved brown leaf  
brushes the back of my hand,  
autumn's first cold kiss.



## I Was In The Right Place

Wayne Atherton

I stumbled into the Old Worthen House  
hoping for a glimpse  
into a distant familiar past  
I was never part of—  
    a grin full of wisdom,  
    an outdated mannerism,  
    conversation without affectation—  
but all I got  
was flat draught beer  
and Laser Karaoke.

Atherton

## Tar, Baby

What may be salvaged  
between the crumbling edges  
of these tarred roads—  
fragments of conversation  
between driver and passenger  
scattered randomly—  
wild dice  
always on a roll.  
Take me to an all-night diner.  
Sober me up with strong black coffee.  
Here, under midnight's fluorescence,  
all the faces  
appear ghastly pale—  
too many cigarettes—  
too many greasy burgers—  
too much drink.

Later,  
standing  
under a street lamp,  
my thumb will cast a shadow  
upon the pavement—  
hoping for a ride  
out of anywhere,  
out of time.

## Stay

*Will Eno*

There is no leash law that I know of in Spelling, Massachusetts. There is a history of law in the back of my mind. Sometimes I think that there is just no telling. There is a painting of Pop, at the top of the stairs. Sometimes I think that I am just not all there. There is a wire dog run that is strung up out back. Sometimes I think about dogs and the law. There is not too much to me, to honestly tell the truth.

Pop is our dog—leashed, painted or dead. Pop is the one, I do not mind telling, whose picture was painted. Not that he asked for it, mind you, someone just said: sit. There is a picture of that painting in the back of my mind. There is only so far in the way I remember. Sometimes I think I am glad to have pictures. Sometimes I think boy what else do I have.

Pop is a palindrome.

Pop is a saint and he was house-trained too. House-trained there in that house with the stairs that we walked on, the stares we gave the floor while we were eating dinner. He would roam and come home and we would not think: sometime soon this whole house will seem wooden. We did not think: Thank you Pop, for wagging your tail, for barking at cars.

You know, I am house-trained too—schooled in the stairs up and down and the law of the sitting in the living room chairs. I know bedtime and dinnertime and the morningtime time when Pop must go out for a walk. There was a harking when Pop walked off the collar he wore, his record of shots. His name and shots were on record in Spelling.

*Eno*

Forget about the law. I don't know shit about history. Pop on the run in the rain was a sight to be seen.

Pop did not like the wire dog run. We never put him on it and he always came back home. He knew about his dinnertime at the end of the day; the chairs that he could sleep on and the chairs that he could not. He always slept well. He could manage the stairs and he remembered his name. He knew of our little laws and he was gentle with children. He barked when he wanted and when he was in want. Pop was a Golden. He was not like any of us.

There is a quality to my picture of Pop, my remembering, that stays flat and quiet, a painting. There is a width to my history about one thin book wide. Sometimes I think I do not have enough. There is a shame to our silence compared to that dog. Sometimes in a sweater I smell his wet fur.

Sit, Pop. Stay. There's a good boy. Pop.

At the end of the day, when the saints come marching in or whatever, there is just there, and how I try to remember. There are sometimes, and they scare me half to death. I am in want. I am not going back to Spelling.

Woof.

## Quilt

Robert Sanchez

Angles snipped from cloth  
Patient stitches into pinwheels

Patches of this and that  
From bolts at the mill store  
And father's shirt and sunday tie

Patterns wild and tame  
Hues unknown by nature  
Capture  
Voices of the past  
Patterned comfort for a child

## Electric Night Horizon

*Barnett Berger*

Not a dream sequence  
But winter  
You can see as you walk upon ghosts,  
The white chill of this season  
Even as variegated lights  
Invade the lingering  
Brown thoughts of timeless fences and swallows.

Electric night horizon is waiting  
It courses between the bridge cables  
Provokes ripples in the barely-moving river  
Speaks without voice of the acceleration of love  
And washes tears upon snow  
That has already melted  
In the pocket of a speck of dawn



## Threnody for Ray Draper

Now the pavement where your shadow preceded you  
A dark leopard's walk  
Red shirt, black vest  
Black felt hat  
An earring—gold on ebony  
A body of mahogany wire  
A face as beautiful as it was condemned  
And the golden burden clasped to the chest  
By thundercloud black hands  
The great horn  
The tuba

Now a solo for pavements remembered but departed  
An audience locked in the trance of memory  
And a red sun

Now a cold wind  
But warm and sweet with a heart of candy  
Blows past the fence  
And stirs the pebbles again and again  
A death in the family  
A train in the distance  
And finally  
Loving tears  
For  
the tuba player

## The Lion

*Marie Louise St. Onge*

I thought that my father  
would roar into his death,  
not know how to surrender.  
I thought he would churn and fight.

That's not how it was.  
Slowly his body grew pale  
sunlight to moonlight,  
he stood in his shadow.

Gradually  
he shortened and curled  
back to the position  
he started from.

At his center he eclipsed despair.  
In his greatest act of courage  
my father said good-bye  
and laid down with the lamb.

## A Living Wage

Winter's bird  
flies  
with purpose.  
Her silent passage  
through heavy snow  
rewarded.

The once bloodied berry  
no  
longer  
drips.

## Screams

William J Britton Jr

The canyon screams its face  
in bold reminder of its birth,  
the splitting Earth,  
a gulf as wide and deep as chasms  
where the oceans swim their waves  
in other places.  
And the mortal feeling quickens like a pulse,  
in real appreciation of fragility.  
And in the rude unsettling of screams  
the myths are put to rest  
of incoherent mutterings,  
of loves denied or lost, or even further,  
of the things we call ambition.  
Screams are natural,  
screams of birth and death and being,  
open mouthed as canyons  
on the changing face of Earth.

## At Fifty

Cups of tulips  
teased to early fullness  
by March rains,  
rills of water  
pleasing yellow hills  
to green again,  
winter breaking everywhere.  
I'm shaking of the shackles  
of a dark time.  
You're writing of an August heat  
you'd like to share.  
My whole world lifting  
like a cloud bank  
softly into light.

## In Boca Lupo

Deborah L Ormay

Wastes drift  
eternal ice.  
Cold night goddess ascends  
her throne  
to wash in blue  
the land below.  
Shadows mimic in  
perfection life  
giving life.  
Rising from warm bodies,  
pups squirm.  
Sniffs mate.  
Lone,  
and strides up hoary rise.  
Douglas fir  
cuts horizon like  
India ink.  
Sits.  
Shifts snow  
for a comfortable stance.  
Sniffs air with aware  
nostrils.  
Cocks ear toward wind.



It howls.  
It sings but solos not  
tonight.  
Bending back his silver  
head  
opens his pink mouth.  
He haunts wind  
songs with primal  
tones.  
White canyon  
cliffs echo  
strains so old.  
Mate peers out.  
Listens.  
Turns.  
Checks small ones.  
Assured, yields to a beckon  
indescribable  
in force.

## Forty Degrees in February

*Cynthia Joyner*

I look with light blue sky eyes  
Evergreens drift amid networks of gray  
Lichens and mosses caress rough trunks  
With green variegated velvets

I wear a whispery shawl of air  
Carded by pine needles  
Woven by branches  
Sent lofting down to warm me

I hear lingering oak leaves rattle  
Preened by windy fingers  
The burbling of chickadees  
Is birdsong piped through honey

I walk past puddles of melted morning snow  
Beneath thawing leafy compost  
Rock and root arch and bump abruptly  
Disturbing the dreams of moles

I drink the living air  
Promises of cold to come  
Will be soon kept and later broken  
By the breathing of winter

## Wet October

Migrating wild geese  
Wings beating, long necks outstretched  
flying in the rain.

Rain-drenched autumn tree  
floating froth of gold aloft  
on black velvet spokes.

Branches against sky  
a fallen splendor of leaves  
carpets the wet ground.

## Hungry for Peace

Robert Loudin

The rains stop.  
Winds tease  
carry woman-scents  
through masonry cracks.  
A calliope of pleas  
rustle like autumn leaves  
on wind-blown ground  
before settling  
within stone walls.

## winter's beauty

i saw dark clouds  
unleash the fury  
of a winter storm  
without warning  
swirling snow  
spilled over the earth  
trees shivered  
in whipping wind  
from my window  
i scooped  
a handful of snow;  
it watered  
in my mouth  
then served myself  
an icicle.

## In Bed

*Katherine Mercurio*

You trace the slope of my upturned belly,  
stroke it with your palm, finger my naval,

your nail cut short to the tip, so unlike your frenzied  
probing, was it almost nine months ago?

Only this time, something inside responds,  
a frightened raft nudges, tossing, sloshing,

salty, wet, wood creaking an omen, a castaway  
holding its breath, swimming against the northeast

wind. You lower your head to listen, your cheek skims  
my smooth surface, cases the regions for swells and rises,

I pull the brushed cotton blanket up over my knees,  
tuck the pillow beneath the nape of my neck,  
press hard my white skin, stretched out taut in anticipation.



## Plum Island

In our kitchen  
 of our beach front cottage,  
 I sweat over the old stove,  
 wipe my forehead,  
 push ends of wet, black, hair  
 back into my bun.  
 Stir rice for lunch  
 while my husband  
 slips up behind,  
 pokes my ribs,  
 runs before I can turn.

Laying my daughter down  
 on the sandy floor,  
 I turn my back  
 to reach for a diaper—  
 she's off. And I  
 lumber after her  
 like the Giant after Jack,  
 crush her pink teether  
 with my big, bare, foot,  
 and run on,  
 ignoring my laughing husband.  
 She hides under the table,  
 naked in her own yellow pool,  
 playing peek-a-boo between table legs,  
 giggling at her joke.

At two, they nap  
 on the living room couch.  
 I spread a pink cotton blanket  
 outside in the yard,  
 collapse on my back  
 and stretch.  
 Flick black ants off my elbows  
 and lift my eyes  
 to the tie-dyed sky,  
 watching warm clouds drop  
 lower, lower, and lower.  
 Sleepily, I reach to embrace them,  
 wanting their passionate, wet kiss,  
 but they dissolve—  
 sweet specters of August air.

# The Tip of Her Nose

Kim Eubanks

Just how long she had been leading a double life she was not quite sure. If it had a definite beginning, it had eluded her; but now it was necessary. She marveled that Alex hadn't commented on the change. He had looked at her the same way for the past twenty-three years, looking past the slight black smudges under her eyes, the faded pallor of her skin which she clumsily tried to conceal with makeup. But then Alex rarely noticed anything beyond the facts and figures of his accounting business these days. Big clients had signed on—influential clients—and Alex was basking in the success of being needed.

Sitting across the living room from him, Adrianna studied Alex's face as he sat watching the evening news. Much of what had attracted her when they were dating was still intact. She remembered how she had loved the way she could tuck her head under his chin when they stood chest to chest. His tallness and the firmness of his limbs when he wrapped them around her gave her such a feeling of safety. Even now, when in sleep he forgot his apathy and held her, she still felt safe.

"It's his hair," she thought to herself. Though it had thinned lightly over the years, he kept it cropped very short now. It was neat and complimented his still-boyish face, but it was in stark contrast to the long, curly locks that had framed his face when they met. Styles change; people change. She had often marveled at Alex's contrasts. How that heart-shaped mouth could both endear and disarm was a wonder to her. He drew people to him with his little boy smile, but those who

Eubanks

dared tread too closely would soon come face-to-face with his biting wit. Though she had been taken aback by him in the beginning, sometimes she missed those rough edges. His razor edge wit had dulled to sarcasm. It crept into their conversations now, thick, sticky phrases of sarcasm that hung about the room like dripping, suffocating honey.

Alex pushed up the sleeves of his starched white shirt, stretched out his arms and reached for the financial section of the newspaper. Balancing his bifocals on the edge of his nose, he stared intently at the paper, appearing to be absorbed in his reading. When he was sure she wasn't looking, Alex stared directly at Adrianna. He focused his eyes upon her face, straining almost, urging his heart to feel. Turning back to the paper he read voraciously, as if the swallowing up of words would somehow fill the void.

They had become adept at hiding from each other. The breakfast coffee, out the door, kiss hello, goodnight dear routine of their lives had become a comfortable camouflage. Looking at her again now, he remembered how the very first time he saw her he had a tremendous urge to cup her face in his hands and kiss the tip of her nose, even before he knew her name. The fragility of her beauty was still evident, but something about the circles under her eyes created a hard, cold feeling in the pit of his stomach. There was something accusational about those dark circles, as though an inner agony was rising to the surface of her skin and threatening to consume her face. In defense he turned away. There was almost an audible click as he closed his heart.

Adrianna had been wondering for an hour



why Alex had not even commented on her being so late coming home tonight. He had always been a stickler for promptness and hated it when she didn't have dinner on the table precisely at 6:30. Tonight he didn't even look up from the ledger papers spread askew on the kitchen table when she breezed through the door. She made a flurry of pots and pans and apologies, but he just muttered civilities and waited until dinner was ready, then cleared his things off the table and ate silently.

Sitting there, shoulders hunched slightly as she bent over her knitting, Adrianna caught the smell of the after-shave wafting up from her hands. She breathed it in, remembering where it came from, and shot another glance over at Alex.

"Of course," she thought to herself, "a wax face is incapable of smell."

A sad smile of irony contorted her lips. At the dinner table earlier her stomach had jolted when she caught the scent of the other man on her skin. She was sure Alex must have smelled it when she leaned over him to put his plate on the table. She imagined him jumping from his chair, throwing his fork to the floor in anger and confronting her. But there had only been the steady rhythm of chewing, the touching of his napkin to the corner of his mouth after every third bite. Adrianna shifted her weight in her chair and continued knitting. A sudden compulsion to tear apart the joined pieces of yarn caused her hands to tremble, but she steadied herself and continued weaving the purple yarn into intricate loops and knots. It was a sweater for Alex's mother—purple was her favorite color.

Alex watched the way her slender hands moved

the knitting needles in a smooth repetitive motion. The clicking together of the needles made a sound which he was beginning to find unbearably annoying. It was a staccato sound, almost like a chant, and in the back of his mind words formed to match the sound. "She's cheating, she's cheating, she's cheating."

He had found out by accident. A client had canceled their 4:30 meeting last Wednesday, so Alex had left the office early for a leisurely drive home. It was on the side street next to the corner variety store a block from their house that he noticed her car. He slowed to pull in next to her, but kept going when he caught sight of the man sitting very close with his arm around her.

For a week Alex had been waiting for the rage to come, but it never did. His first emotion was actually surprise. Adrianna was such a timid little mouse at times. To see her in a parked car with a stranger was so extraordinary, and in a strange way it intrigued him. Alex knew their love was in free fall: like a prop engine plane it had coughed, sputtered, then became deadly silent. But up until now he thought they were both paralyzed, rushing through that deadly inertia of fear, listening for the sounds of the crash. Was this Adrianna's parachute? Was Adrianna in love?

Adrianna looked up from her knitting and watched curiously as a frown creased Alex's forehead. She had not slept with any of them. She would simply strike up a conversation in the grocery store or in the line at the bank. Sometimes it would lead to cup of coffee, a discreet phone call, maybe even a secret meeting in the park, but always when it got close to becoming more, she would find a way to end it. Then she'd

promise herself it would not happen again, that she no longer needed it. It was a desperate game really, and lately she had grown tired of it. Whatever solace it had brought in the beginning had worn thin. She was purposefully sloppy about her movements these past few weeks, but it didn't seem to matter. Nothing seemed to matter and nothing had swallowed her whole.

Alex picked up the remote, flipping through television channels aimlessly. A familiar scene caught his eye and he hesitated, recognizing an old movie favorite. It was the movie he had taken Adrianna to see on their very first date. He was twenty years old again. The theater was dark and very crowded, but he felt as if they were the only two in the room. She leaned over him and held out the cardboard box of popcorn they were sharing so he could take a handful. As he reached in to grab some, he bumped the carton and the entire contents spilled out into her lap. He was mortified, but her beautiful face just dissolved into helpless giggles. She was so uncontrollable that the usher had come and admonished them for the disruption. He loved her from that moment on.

Coming back from this reverie, Alex realized the click of the knitting needles had stopped. He looked up and saw Adrianna staring at the television, tears coursing down her face in shiny rivulets, but no sound coming from her mouth. It was as if a hand reached inside his chest and clamped a fist around his heart. The anguish brought him to his feet and before he knew it he was standing before her, his clenched hands at his side, staring at her. Memories came now like flood waters. He felt as though the compilation of their lives was a warm

stream he had waded into, and now he was standing still, up to his chest, the waters swirling around him as he fought to keep his footing. Why hadn't they been warned? Why did people never talk about the insidious, seeping poison of indifference? Alex's mind raced to find where the connection had ended and the rift begun. Maybe if he examined the event, he could somehow shake the weight of blame that suffocated his breathing. There was no point. Complacency, like a hypnotic mantra had lulled him, deadened him. He had closed his eyes, averted his face from the brightness. Alex searched Adrianna's face, as her eyes met his. Surprise warmed him. He still saw bits of himself there and wondered how long it had been since he had really looked into her eyes.

Adrianna sat very still. There were unformed words pushing at the edge of her lips, but she suppressed them. The silence had changed and she didn't want to clutter it just yet. She listened to its sound, wrapping it around her, pulling it close like a cloak. Reckoning. Alignment. The features of Alex's face shifted subtly and Adrianna knew if her face were mirrored she would see its changes. Moments stretched toward eternity as Alex stood poised in front of her, then slowly, gently, he leaned, cupped her face in his hands, and ever so tenderly kissed the tip of her nose.



## Peavey: A Letter

Ann Chandonnet

Dear Dad,  
Is it six years already?  
This morning I see this one word, *peavey*,  
as it brings you back—  
your round-shouldered walk,  
your clean smell like percale on the line,  
your wide grin,  
complete with dip of chin toward neck.

I don't need to close my eyes  
to see you at the wood lot on Burns Hill,  
felling birch and pine,  
limbing trucks,  
using tractor and chain  
to snake the logs out to the dirt road,  
and then, tipping them into the place on the pile.  
I hear (I *feel* through my soles)  
the peculiar thunk each heavy green log made  
when it found its home in the ragged pyramid.

In your hand, the peavey seemed light as a javelin.  
You levered with it like a third arm,  
the way you did everything,  
un-self-consciously, economically,  
There was never waste of motion with you.

Nor of words.  
Words were good washers, shiny wall anchors,  
to be stored in little drawers in the machine shop,  
hoarded.

Chandonnet

If I squander them all,  
all those steel brads and zinc tar paper shacks,  
it won't bring you back.

But two syllables can: pea' vey.

Never waste.

Rub off the rust; sort out the straight nails.  
I used to scowl, scuffing my boots in the leaf litter,  
because we couldn't have a "good" Christmas tree—  
a perfect seven-footer, straight as a plumb line.  
But no; those would grow to lumber, good clear boards,  
two decades down the road.  
You'd shiny up and top out a big tree,  
maybe a springy cedar,  
and whatever fell those 40 feet  
like a dead monkey,  
that was it.

(So it had to be trussed to the window locks  
on both sides of the corner; so what?)

Words to you were blurry doodlings, inexact ink on paper.  
Wouldn't water cattle, wouldn't patch a roof.  
They deserved to stay where they belonged—  
in the *Reader's Digest* vocabulary test  
you challenged yourself with once a month.  
Words were never what they are to me,  
flighty as barn cats,  
resonant as the bell  
in the Yellow Meeting House steeple.  
I used to shinny up a pile of seasoning boards  
behind the shop to reach the lowest plum branches;

no one else bothered.

But the woodlot, the big trees, spoke to us both.  
The light filtered like music through feathery limbs;  
it called for attentive silence  
And we were closest, silent,  
sharing a common task.

It is now six years since I stood on that road.  
The snow fills up the woods again;  
pale Mayflowers guard the buds beneath.  
I watch and listen, though I am far away.

Love,  
Toots

## Dreams So Real

Paul Connelly

I have lost blood  
Shall I tell you my dream?  
If the wind could bring dew to bathe my face  
Then I might awake  
So I dream of air

A soldier falls wounded, forgotten on the fields  
As all around armies battle in the mist  
His world has dwindled to a small patch of dirt  
And pain and thirst  
Soldier, if I could, I would be the breeze  
Bringing gentle rains, and you could swallow me  
And so he dreams

He dreams of me

I dream of water  
Running through your fingers  
The arch of your bare foot against the stone  
You knelt to splash your face, cupping your hands  
You say this was in a dream, but I know it was real

The girl and the boy huddle under coarse wool  
A last lovers' meeting, before the dying fire  
They will never wed: her parents have promised her  
Loving in desperation, soon they are spent  
Tomorrow he will leave, marching with the infantry  
Tonight must last forever so they will try not to sleep  
And they dream

They dream of the soldier

I dream of fire, filling me up  
The sun on our face, penetrating heat  
Blood that took flame as our bodies touched  
Then I would have spilled each burning drop for you  
A dream, you tell me: I say it was more real

On the steps an old man sits nodding in the sunlight  
His eyes are shielded by his low hat brim  
Ears skilled in the art of ignoring the youngsters' music  
Adjacent alley smells; warm earth, brick and tar  
Memory or imagination, now which is more precious?  
He recalls his mother's face, he remembers his wife  
But he dreams

He dreams of the lovers

I dream of earth, the sides of the gorge  
Towering over us, as earth will one day cover us  
Grit against my knees, your arms thrown back  
Sweat mixed with soil, our eyes all-knowing  
How could we dream of being so awake?

A woman floats in the sea  
Of her own silver hair  
The world-ash her bedpost, the night sky her blanket  
Stars like crystals droplets ring her smooth brow  
Her eyes are closed, her lips are half-smiling  
Half-asleep or half-awake, and she dreams and dreams  
And she dreams

She dreams us all

Evan Klein

A Priest  
naps on his pew,  
newspaper over face,  
dreaming of a beggar  
asleep on a park bench.

2

beggar and priest converge  
at the road to the churchyard  
& shake the skeleton fingers  
of soot faced zombies  
clothed in black tattered tuxedos,  
& lightly kiss the cheeks  
of maidens  
in white gowns.

3

the beggar gives the girl away  
the priest is the best man.  
God asks "do you take one another  
in the bonds of matrimony."  
They say yes,  
& so begins the marriage  
of the living and the dead.



## Dance

*Gregor Former*

He likes to dance with imaginary partners;  
They never ask him to explain himself.

They always understand;  
He never has to reason.  
They never criticize;  
They're always eager to listen.

He holds the conversation, everyone listens to him;  
He impregnates the pauses with disillusionment,

They never tire of him;  
He holds their minds like dice.  
Roll them over their heads;  
Thrill them with his concoctions.

Dancing in the light of a crooked moon;  
Falling through the cracks of a lover's swoon.  
Dancing on the strands of a lost lover's hair;  
Bleeding from the wounds of the hope that he wears.

He remembers her face  
As it cuts through the madness.  
Her gifts of savagery  
Needle him with voodoo memories.

## Afraid of the Fate

*Robert R Schaefer*

Watching Kate  
find her world

( the one she walks in

is seeing  
one bright light  
after another  
clicking on in quick  
succession

- her body dances  
her finger points  
her voice squeals

Watching Kate  
find her place

( in a male dominant world

is watching eyes  
grow wider and wider  
until they narrow  
with understanding



## This is What I do

Schaefer

When I am sure  
Maureen and the Patoot  
are sound asleep,

I sneak in and  
look at both  
and without  
a sound thrust  
my hand into  
the air and  
scream——YES!

## Lowell Winter

Jeff Zagaria

Downtown the bumbs walk the beat  
Bread crumbs and beer bottles,  
Scrounging dumpster monsters,  
Popping their heads out  
When I least expect them.  
But now I know to expect them,  
I'm still surprised.

Winters bite hits my neck  
While winds mate under tall skyline,  
Twilight, red, reflections of  
What is to come.  
While city slick playboys are just waking,  
Break lights breaking,  
The night owls shaking,  
While his honey's baking,  
hoping He'll come back to roost.

The snow on the sidewalk costs too much,  
For Old Man Winter,  
So only cold winds blow through the alleys  
on Tuesdays,  
But, Saturdays snow storm was one hell of a drift,  
Blowing snow on the sidewalk.  
Only Mudy Puddles is left in the gutters with  
sand in his hair and salt on his lip.  
A dripping nose is all,  
And cold.  
But no snow,  
No, no snow.

## The Man Across the Hall

*Gregg Shapiro*

The man across the hall;  
I haven't seen his face.  
Only his stick-figure ankles  
and his white-socked feet.

I haven't seen his face.  
Only heard his cough-cough voice.  
Calling, calling, calling  
Irene, IRENE.

I can't eat when he coughs.  
Phlegm sounds off his ribs.  
Pounding like a Grand Canyon echo.  
Echo, echo, echo.

I ride the bed like an amusement park,  
play Russian Roulette with the TV.  
He calls the "ladies."  
He wants to go home.

The fifth floor nurses wouldn't let  
this happen. I want to rip my plastic  
name bracelet off, stuff it in my ears.  
I want to imitate the rain.

In desperation, I will connect  
the dots where blood was taken  
from my pumpkin-colored arms.  
I will get well, get out.

## To My Granddaughter

*Maddona Robiton*

The contradiction in life  
is that we die.  
In your presence  
lines between then and now  
become thinner.  
Irony nearly understood  
—and the promise exquisite.

## The Reincarnate

*Naomi Cherkofsky*

He stretched regally in the cage  
Head lifted above the roiling dust  
Orange fur, black stripes satin  
Flicking flies with tail swish

My sons stood in awed silence  
As he rose slowly to full height  
Muscle haunches twining in power  
Held nose against the restraining bars

Gazed at me though in remembrance  
With the eyes of my long dead father  
A chord stretched from beast to woman  
And I knew this was his punishment

## December Green

*Stephen Marino*

"It's an Irish moon,"  
Grandma would say, as if  
Moons were neighborhoods.

Yet this winter night, this season,  
When the solstice comes  
Swaddled in a halo of cold,  
When I await the conception  
Of rain from sleet to snow,  
When I wait in my apartment  
For the rise of hope in the radiator,  
When the suicides congeal  
(The wind chill factor reading  
Into their hearts),  
The moon does seem to tinge  
The sky green.

Deep in winter,  
I look for green in everything,  
But December green ebbs pale:  
The familiar green of the traffic light,  
The frozen green seaweed  
On Rockaway shore,  
The green hue of the celadon  
In the Chinese restaurant,  
The green eyes of the dog  
Glowing in the dark foyer.

Even  
The green of my Christmas tree  
Seeps  
From its trunk.

## Circles

*Lyn Paladino*

In spring a large circle of bibulous frogs  
pass wassail cup and song around shores of pond  
round again and again until  
all are "tr-r-ronk," under the pond  
but aldermatic patriarch, sole wine-bibber.

In summer whippoorwills chant vespers:  
four or five in different parts of woods  
chanting one bar behind another  
singing a round at intervals. One poorwill  
circles round as if tethered by a spring.

In autumn the Concord bell rings  
echoes of first sounds out to horizon,  
part repetition, part voice of the woods,  
nature modulating a circular means  
of communication: reciprocal communion.

In winter Walden Pond, earth's eye,  
under morning sun records  
day, an epitome of the year;  
night is winter, morning and evening  
are spring and fall, and noon summer.

In spring pond surface mirrors sky,  
becomes a lower heaven, and its purity  
betokens the transcendent self.

*There is more day to dawn,  
the sun is but a morning star.*

## The Cold Sunrise

*Shelby Stephenson*

Rubber soles hiss on worn boards  
beside the well.  
She lets the rope slip down.  
How much water will it take to keep the tobacco roots moist?  
She straightens up, hair blowing,  
figure scant in the chilled riddle of planting time.



## After the Wedding

*Pamela Mikalson*

Body surfing  
in Hawaii  
on my honeymoon  
you at six  
months growth  
inside  
could feel all  
eyes upon us  
riding the waves  
what a rush  
laughing  
on the beach

On Molokai  
they wouldn't  
let us ride  
a donkey  
and it was  
so hot I  
took off my  
blouse  
bare belly  
bare breasts  
halfway down  
the long trail  
down to the  
old leper  
colony  
of Father  
Damien

*Mikalson*

Whenever I  
lifted my  
shirt to  
let the  
sun shine  
through  
to you  
you danced  
inside of me

Little elbows  
jabbing  
like later  
I often  
returned  
to your  
forehead  
when you snuck up  
from behind  
when I was  
busy and  
my back  
was turned

Taller now  
but you  
remember  
Soon you'll  
be too tall for  
me to kiss  
the top of  
your head  
anymore

Already you're  
having to  
bend down  
somewhat  
You tilt  
in the  
direction of  
my face  
like a  
respectful  
bow  
to an  
elder

## Winter

Nathan Connolly

The cold made you cling, drawing  
life nearer. We could have bundled into balls  
rolling around in the slush for warmth.

Frost thumbs his nose at musty street lamps  
churning out light like a shivering loomster  
spinning out spools of yellow, red and orange  
against winter's prying, indifferent touch.

In waiting panes of horizontal windows  
winter laughs out at rubber, vinyl undersoles  
pushing them away, silently, quickly.

Snow is heaven hugging the earth,  
laying billowy arms across the countryside  
and squeezing until the children come out to shake hands;  
playing in the pliant arms of a reluctant god.

Winter is the season of leafless limbs taut  
against the frozen breath of the humble north  
stripping the world of its vibrant summer treasure.

Naked arms and legs in cheerful summer  
growing brown by Sunshine Lake;  
still my gentle thoughts glide  
like ice-skates into the past.

I learned to love in January, kissing  
beneath a sky bright in a thousand icicles  
and loving in a bed as cold as a snowcastle.

## The Vigil

*Edward Hyland*

—for my son, T. J., 1969

Each night since he died,  
just before daybreak,  
the wind brings him home again  
like a branch  
tapping against the windowpane.  
Shadows of branches on the ceiling  
that were hidden in the dark  
emerge in the soft, grey light  
slowly, extending over me  
like hands offering benediction  
and then slowly fade  
as daylight separates us again.

*Hyland*

## Irish Moon

1

Nana showed me how to dig deep around weeds,  
how to pull the taproots out clean  
so her roses and favorite pansies were safe.  
She talked about her father in County Mayo  
working their farm during the famine,  
laying open the ground, row after row.  
An orange sun in late afternoon was an Irish moon:  
planting, weeding out, plowing under, we worked  
together on hands and knees,  
heads almost touching over her blossoms.

2

Now there is the matter of teaching my son  
about caring for a garden.  
While he's tossing dirt bombs  
I roll a clump of earth between my hands  
for the ache of not crushing it  
and put my fingers into Nana's death  
as into delicate, white bones I find  
among dry leaves in the garden.  
Keep digging, I tell myself. Keep digging.



At the Park Street Station:  
February 21, 1991

Jacquelyn Malone

The train door opens and from far out  
on the platform, above the rush-hour's thrashings, comes  
the pure, high tones of "Meditation" from *Thais*, the sound

as solitary as the Concord River beyond the stone arch  
that cars rattle across, or as a hawk riding  
thermal updrafts, a sound that is the isolation

of a child in the grass training an ant to crawl  
finger to finger or of a gull sitting in a low trough  
between two waves in a storm. The violin

is beyond my sight so I don't know if the player  
feels the plunge as the notes, now low,  
murmur one into another, nudging a longing to stir

from its cubbyhole under my ribs, a longing that builds  
to bind me to this train, this station, these battering waves  
of noise, until the tight faces around me seem children,

needing home and dinner. There's an old man, sleeping  
on a bench, lulled by clatter and groaning steel,  
safe in a crowd from some loner's penchant for spitting

or blood. Then the subway door is closing on the music,  
crumpling in its rubber gaskets a *Globe* photo of tanks.  
The gun turrets of both point like magnetic needles,

Malone

the sand at the horizon, monotonous and flat, and the violin  
is distanced and forlorn, like the men inside  
each hatch—each aiming at nothing more than life.

## Autumn

Malone

The burnt-out monotone of November offers little to believe in: color a memory, the lush tangle of leaves shrunk to the forkings of twigs and stems. There's no pretension, no distraction from the way things are. Yet along the roadside I keep seeing milkweed pods, the sun low enough to parse them into body and soul: the white cotton of the seed nest and the light striking the puff like flint. They stand blazing in the half distance, between me and the horizon, sunbursts confirming each stubby stalk, illusions of fire coming not from the pod but from the light beyond. I keep seeing them through the right side of my windshield: little suns, in a diminutive order of magnitude, erupting from their carpels — those hard, contorted husks.

## Breath

Jeff Loo

Breath—leave me  
to diffuse in leaves and soil,  
I will not stir their green stems  
or secret life—

Breath—part me  
into atoms flowing to the sea,  
I will not ripple the calm green  
with rain—

The grass blade hissing in wind  
is breathing rhythm,  
and the sea responds to squalls  
made of air—

Storm sunken ships yield  
no trophies and no wisdom  
to trophies—like breaths also  
scattered I must come and go—

#1

*Lou Susi*

marry me  
scare me 2 death & say yes  
proposing 2 u i confess what i feel  
i truly possess a love only u can help quench  
i want 2 die making love & laughing  
at the noise it creates &  
i want 2 live by attempting 2 die  
many times with my marry me mate

*Susi*

#2

americano  
americano  
q: why r wee all caught up in the soloflex sin drum sheena east & cocks &  
breasts thee longer thee bigger thee better the mo isle marry ya?  
americano  
americano  
q: my godfather's son at the eighth grade danse asked a belmont gurl 2  
danse sand shee asked him back "what duz your dad doo 4 a living?"  
americano  
a merry canoe  
q: why do wee watch sew fluidlee sew much tv?  
americano  
americano  
q: have u noticed how quickly people all drive bye in their own self-  
contained cotton candy machines on wheels (& how serious silly it  
seams)?  
americano  
americano  
q: when will wee finally resolve our racist policy?  
americano  
i marry ken now  
q: wide dew hee watt sow flew id lee sue motch tee vee?  
americano  
americano  
q: as i sit in this pile 'o' trash & gunk & junk & think i think how  
can how could wee bee sew slothfully this piss disposable society?  
americano  
i'me hair hee can know  
q: is this business wee calla cunt tree really were king oar izzit all  
a destructive organization manipulation pentramilgration ovulation  
gesticulation damn this nation & the false intentions started years  
& years ago by 5 fucking white guise wearing powdered drunken



donut whigs & navy goddamn blue curtains buying all the land up  
in god wee trust bank robbers well before wee trust the govern-  
meant?

americano

americano

q: america?

no

## Contributors

**Mark Pestana** lives in Lowell and is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. He has been published in *Moonstone* and was the first place winner of the Lowell Humanities Corporation's Poe Prize contest. Mr. Pestana is also a member of the local rock band The Four Last Things.

**Joan Dalla** teaches Essay Writing at Emerson College where she is completing her MFA degree and finishing her first manuscript of poetry. Ms. Dalla has been published in *Alchemy Magazine*, *Cranbook Writer's Anthology*, *Quarry West*, *Riverrun*, *Black River Review*, and the *Beacon St. Review*.

**Taylor Graham** works with her husband as a volunteer search and rescue dog handler in the Sierra foothills. Her poems have been widely published in literary journals such as the *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Poet Lore*, *Sequa*, *Southern Humanities Review*, and the *Yale Literary Magazine*. Ms. Graham has received nominations for The Pushcart Prizes and the Science Fiction Poetry Association's Rhyslins Awards.

**Mariola Mroczko** is a native of the Lowell area currently attending the University of Massachusetts at Lowell where she majors in English. Active in the University's drama club, Ms. Mroczko hopes to attend film school upon receiving her B.A. This is her first appearance in a literary journal.

**Margaret Smith** is a recent graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell and currently works as a reporter for the *Lowell Sun* and staff assistant at UMass Lowell. Ms. Smith is also founder, editor, and publisher of the local magazine, the *Banshee*.

**Beverly A McCoy** lives in Chelmsford where she is an English teacher for Chelmsford High School. Ms. McCoy has had poetry and fiction published in *Tapestry* and *Lifestyles*.

**Brian Robinson** attended the University of Massachusetts at Lowell and now lives in Chelmsford where he works as a technician. This is his first appearance in a literary journal.

**Wayne Atherton** lives and works in Maine. His poems and drawings have appeared in *Kennebec* and the *Café Review*. One of his landscape paintings was published as a cover for *Appalachia*. Mr. Atherton is also Co-Editor of the *Café Review*.

**Will Eno** lives and works in Brooklyn, New York where he is the editor of *Meantime: Poems and Stories*. He is very happy to have his birthday occur in May.

**Robert Sanchez** is a resident of Billerica, Massachusetts where he works as a technical writer. Mr. Sanchez has written an unpublished novel, and his poetry has appeared in the *Lowell Pearl*.

**Barnett Berger** lives in Brooklyn, NY where he is employed as a social worker. Mr. Berger received his Masters degree in Social Work from Columbia University. This is his first appearance in a literary journal.

**Marie Louise St. Onge** grew up in Lowell and now lives in Wilton N.H. Ms. St. Onge is currently an editor at the *Worcester Review*, and she has recently had poetry published in *RAFALE: Literary Review*, *Café Review* and *Poetry Motel*.

**William J. Britton Jr.** received his business administration degree from Northeastern University, and he is now working on his Masters degree for English and history at Salem State College. Mr. Britton also teaches Western Civilization at Endicott College. Although he has been writing poetry for over 25 years, this is his first publication in a literary journal.

**Deborah L Ormay** is a native of Pennsylvania now living in Lawrence, Massachusetts and working as a secretary. She received her B.S. in special education from Clarion University. Although Ms. Ormay has been writing since the age of 7, this is her first publication in a literary journal.

**Cynthia Joyner** received her B.A. in English from the University of Connecticut in 1974. Ms. Joyner has worked as a technical writer and had short essays published in local newspapers. This is her first appearance in a literary journal.

**Robert Loudin** is currently incarcerated at the State Correctional Institute in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. Mr. Loudin has published two books entitled *Caged Emotions* and *On the Edge*. His poetry has appeared in several journals, including, *Ajax Poetry Letter*, *Writers' Journal*, *Pleider*, and *Gotta Write Network*.

**Katherine Mercurio** is enrolled in the University of Massachusetts at Lowell's Encore program where she is pursuing a degree in English. Ms. Mercurio has been published in *Eclectic Literary Forum* and Middlesex College's *Voices*. She has participated in poetry readings at the Bentley Collegiate Poetry Reading and The Sundance Cafe.

**Kim Eubanks** is employed as a vice-president of administration at a small manufacturing company. When she is not busy with her full-time career and family, Ms. Eubanks is involved in a fiction-writing workshop. This is her first publication in a literary journal.

**Ann Chandonnet** was born in Lowell and now lives in Anchorage, Alaska. Before leaving the Lowell area, Ms. Chandonnet taught English at Lowell State College in the late 1960's. She is currently a senior feature writer



**Paul Connelly** received his B.A. in Religion and Philosophy at Antioch College, and he has a B.S. in Neuroscience and computer science from the University of Massachusetts. He is currently employed as a systems consultant with Digital Equipment Corporation.

**Evan Klein** teaches English at Rockland Community College, and he is the editor of the New York journal *Untitled*. Mr. Klein received his masters degree in creative writing from New York University. His poetry has been published in several journals, including *Chiron Review*, *New York Quarterly*, and the *Lowell Pearl*.

**Gregor Former** is a native of Lowell who attended the University Of Massachusetts at Lowell and was active in the Literary Society. His poetry has appeared in *Galloway Press*.

**Robert R. Schaefer**, a native of the Lowell area currently living in Dracut with his wife Maureen and their two year old daughter Kathryn. Mr. Schaefer has been published in *Merrimack: A Poetry Anthology* and the *Lowell Pearl*.

**Jeff Zagaria** is currently a student at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. Mr. Zagaria self-published his chapbook of poetry.

**Gregg Shapiro** lives in Chicago, Illinois where he is a writer of both poetry and fiction. Mr. Shapiro's work has been published in journals such as *Private Magazine*, *Flip*, *Rambunctious Review*, *Potato Eyes*, *Connecticut River Review*, and the *Fiction Review*.

**Madonna Robiton** lives in Salem, N.H. where she works as a realtor. Ms. Robiton is president of the New Hampshire Poetry Society.

**Naomi Cherkofsky's** manuscript, *The Touch of a Hand*, was the winner of the first Poetry Society of New Hampshire's manuscript contest in 1978. Ms. Cherkofsky published a chapbook, *Tracings of a Marriage*, after the death of her husband.

**Stephen Marino** lives and teaches in New York City. Along with pursuing a Ph.D. in English at Fordham University, Mr. Marino conducts creative writing workshops at St. Francis College. His poetry has appeared in *Montages* and *Echoes*.

**Lyn Paladino** currently lives in Medina, Ohio. She has taught English at Jersey City State, Clark College, Maryville State College, and Central Michigan University. Ms. Paladino has been published in several journals including *Albatross*, *The Forum*, and *Roanoke Review*. A book of her poems, *The Horological Tree*, was published in 1979.

**Shelby Stephenson** lives in South Pines, North Carolina where he teaches literature and creative writing at Pembroke State University, and is the editor of *Pembroke Magazine*. Mr. Stephenson has published several chapbooks of poetry: *The Persimmon Tree Carol*, *Middle Creek Poems*, and *Carolina Shout!* His poems have appeared in many journals, including *The Hudson Review*, and *Potato Eyes*.

**Pamela Mikalson** recently received her B.A. in psychology after a hiatus from school to raise a family. Ms. Mikalson lives in Vermont where she works as a waitress and a nurse's aide. This is her first publication in a literary journal.

**Nathan Connolly** is enrolled in Indiana University as an English major. Mr. Connolly hopes to become a professional writer. This is his first appearance in a literary journal.



**Edward Hyland** has studied poetry with Paul Jenkins, James Tate, and Charles Simic. At the age of seventeen, he was one of the youngest writers accepted for the Breadloaf Writer's Conference. Mr. Hyland has been published in *Crickett Press*, *Aegis*, the *Bradford Review*, and the *Lowell Pearl*.

**Jacquelyn Malone** is a resident of Lowell who has been published in many literary journals, including *Ploughshares*, *Poetry Northwest*, and *Negative Capability*. In 1988, Ms. Malone was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts grant in poetry.

**Jeff Loo** lives in Philadelphia and he has worked as a carpenter's helper, natural foods cook, census man, caregiver of the severely retarded, and a teacher. Mr. Loo has earned two masters degrees from New York University, and his poetry has been published in journals such as *American Poetry Review*, *Crosscurrents*, *Ecospirit*, *Mildred*, *Philadelphia Poets*, and *Poet*.

**Lou Susi** is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell's College of Fine Arts. Currently a resident of Watertown, he is a member of the local rock band Beware the Haberdash. His poetry has appeared in the *Lowell Pearl*.

#### Cover Photograph

**Tom Vanderhoeven** is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell College of Fine Arts. His photography and artwork have been displayed throughout the Lowell area. He is currently a freelance photographer.

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## Appearing This Issue...

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Joan Dalla  
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Robert R. Schaefer  
Jeff Zagaria  
Gregg Shapiro  
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Jacquelyn Malone  
Lou Susi

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